161 [Geographic and Ethnographic Comment on the Lower Ogooué], Ann. de Géogr., No. 68, March 15, 1903.

" is a [67] corruption of the word mpanwe by which the tribes of the coast refer to the Fan." Among them are found the tribes of three great parent branches, the Betsi and the Nzaman of the Madzouna dialect, and the Make of the Maekina dialect. Their number has a [161] strong tendency to decrease due to continuous migration towards the sea, and above all due to lack of births and to stillbirths. There are 361 actually no villages except on the banks of the Ogooué and the Abanga, and in the valley of the Okano along the route that joins the river at Oyem; and a few hamlets of the Make in the interior near small Bakele settlements on the left bank. The whole region of the right bank is depopulated, and one finds no more than frequent patches of short, thick brush without trees, except for some banana trees which are traces of vanished former villages.

Beliefs

● 173 [167] I. Concerning the origin of man, the elements. Whenever a Pahouin recites his genealogy (every child is used to this from his early years, a survival of the need while traveling to make oneself known as a member of a tribe), he ends the list of his ancestors with: "X... son of Nzame," and adds a formula meaning "and the rooster crowed and I was not there." All the Pahouin now living thus claim a common ancestor, Nzame, to whom they attribute supernatural powers but whom they do not worship. This Nzame himself has four known ancestors: Meboere, Nkwa, Soiuma, and Mba Angwe. We have not been able to obtain any information about these, nor about the formula in which the rooster is mentioned [sic]. It seems that this is due to the ignorance of the natives rather than their ill will (many traditions were lost through contact with peoples met in the westward migration and especially through contact with Europeans), since the natives questioned quite voluntarily gave accounts of the life of Nzame as their fathers had described it to them.

●173 In the past Nzame lived a life which his children still live today,
773 proceeding westward as he abandoned villages in which he had lived with his wives and which he vacated after the fields had been exhausted. The number of his wives was so great that it was not known, and his villages were so important that at their sites the forest could not grow back, and this is why there are now plains in the midst of the forest in the Pahouin country.

Nzame arrived at the end of the earth, which is flat, and came up against the sky barring his way, an iron roof covering the earth as a roof covers a hut, and held up at its center by an invisible stake which [68] has since been held up by Ningone Maboere, sister of Nzame. He went to the other side of the sky after having crossed a very wide river, Endam, into which all the rivers empty and which flows all around the earth and under it, bursting through at the thinnest points so as to emerge in the form of springs. Then Nzame stopped and established the village Dzo, which he has not left since.

It is in this village that Nzame still lives with his wives and children. His life is the same as on earth, and there he welcomes the dead and keeps the elements imprisoned, the sun, moon, rain, etc...

773 Every morning, when Okwal the wild fowl calls, Nzame goes to
821 open the door of the hut where the sun sleeps. The sun wakes up, gets on its way, goes around the sky, and returns in the evening when everyone is in bed, to rest in the hut which it left in the morning. The sun is a large ball of fire which gives heat and light as it burns.

The moon also is imprisoned in the village Dzo. It is a large white stone which Nzame regularly shows to the people at night in different phases: small, larger, entirely round, then smaller and smaller, until he hides it for a few days. Because of its whiteness, the moon also gives light.

The rainbow is a big snake which is seen when Nzame gives it permission to go out and drink water from the river.

Sometimes Nzame also opens the door of another hut, and rain comes out, preceded by wind. Rain falls through holes pierced in the sky, which allow the lights of the Dzo village, or the shining eyes of the dead which look at the earth, to be seen at night. These luminous holes are the stars. Sometimes lightning comes out of the hut at the same time as the rain. The former is a little animal that falls on the trees and breaks them, making a noise. In the dry season the rain goes back to the hut, and it is seen at night or in the morning in the form of great white mists rising above the lakes and rivers.

CHAPTER 6

THE BETI AND THE PAHOUIN

THE BETI OR BATI

/Pp. 1-56 not translated/ In the introductory section devoted to the peopling of the area, we have spoken of the Beti, or Bati, who certainly comprised a large group with many branches. They have been subject to many upheavals and, consequently, it is impossible to determine which of them have remained pure Beti and which—according to G. Tessmann's expression—have become "Pahouinized," and to what extent they have become "Pahouinized." Therefore, we will first devote a short paragraph to the Beti, and then another to the Pahouin /Pahuin/.

In the discussion which follows we will speak first of the populations which the authors have grouped under the name of Beti, and then, imperceptibly, we will move on to the Pahouin, but we are not able to decide exactly where the dividing line should be placed.

It is certain that the various branches of the Beti, or Bati, spread over a large area. According to the oral traditions of a number of these peoples, their original habitat was north of the Sanaga River, and near its tributary the Mbam /M'Bam/. /Map 1/ A tiny group of these Bati remained there, and they may still be found southwest of Bafia, on the right bank of the Libous, a tributary of the Sanaga. Their little territory of barely 20 square kilometers is wedged in between the Yambasa /Yambassa/ in the east, the Lemande in the north, and the Baso in the west and to the south. There are only 800 persons altogether in the villages of Kolong (on the route from Bafia to Ngambe) and the hamlets of Mpouka and Nyambat.

Others of the Beti remained north of the Sanaga and divided into a scattering of small groups; when the Germans found them they had not united /58/ and were still migrating. They did not become settled until the Babute had been pushed back to their former habitat by the new occupants.

Bundja
Kombe
Ngoko

[10] present-day Bafia, in numerous villages all along the right bank of
[13] the M'Bam, meeting the Tsinga at the Owama or Afama River and reaching as far as the vicinity of the Yambasa. Others, known as Kombe, were located much farther east on the Maloko River and are probably under the jurisdiction of the Kombe villages, now claimed to be Mvele and Bavek villages (on the vehicular road in the north).

On this Moisel map, the Bundja occupied the whole vast territory, triangular in shape, which lies between the M'Bam and the Sanaga rivers.

●[13] According to the reports of the administrator Cournarie, resumed by the administrator Relly, these peoples lost all cohesion after the Babute invasion in the middle of the last century. According to their traditions, the Kombe were enslaved and consequently dispersed. The Bundja, said to be related to the Mangisa, first crossed the Sanaga. Later, when the Germans pushed the Babute back towards the north, the Bundja, greatly reduced in numbers, recrossed the Sanaga and returned to their former lands.

[30] It would be interesting to investigate these former Beti from the linguistic viewpoint and to find out how much of their former language remains with them. The study should not be made on the basis of entire zones; rather it should be carried out almost village by village throughout a whole area where these peoples may be found juxtaposed and overlapping one another all along a vehicular road. No doubt the study will /sic/ shed but little light on the problem of origins, but it will clearly show what G. Tessmann calls the "Beti-Mbam" languages.

THE NGOKO

[31] [10] Location: 11°15 to 11°30 long.
4°30 to 4°55 north lat.

Physical and Human Geography. The Ngoko are widely dispersed on the left bank of the M'Bam, in the valley of its tributary, the
[33] Ngoko. This little river has a minimal water supply during the dry season, but during the rainy months, on the contrary, it swells beyond the river bed and floods the banks, sometimes for a considerable distance. This is a prairie region adorned with thin shrubs. Near branches of the river, a few clumps of raffia palms can be seen.

Ngoo
Bafok-Tangafuk

361 The several Ngoo villages are stretched over 70 kilometers of trails. A single one may be found on the right bank of the M'Bam, in the immediate vicinity of Bafia, on the vehicular road. Another is located about 30 kilometers to the southeast, also on the vehicular road but on the left bank of the M'Bam; it is Goura, inhabited by the Ngoo who moved down toward fertile land.

●173 The Ngoo say that they descended from the Mangisa a long time ago—perhaps during the time when the latter still lived north of the Sanaga. The traditions of the Ngoo also say that their original ancestor was the same as that of the Bettinga, the Kombe, and the Bundju. Is this myth or history? This extended kinship brings together all the Beti.

The folk history of the Ngoo begins only with the war against the Babute in the last century. At that time they were dispersed, and most of them clustered around the Ngoo River. When attacked by the Babute, those nearest the M'Bam crossed the river and settled among the Bafia, whom they pushed back. /63/ Others, the Tanakum, were driven all the way back to the Tambasa. The people of the village of Ngoo submitted and were enslaved. They were deported north to Linte and Tibati and south to Goura. /Map 2/

175 At Goura the young slave Ndenge was born of a Ngoo father and a
167 Djanti mother, both deported there. As an adult, Ndenge enlisted in the native army of the Germans and attracted the attention of his superiors by his intelligence and zeal. They assigned him the task of reuniting all the exiles, and little by little turned over to him all those who were freed through their wars—first the exiles found among the Tambasa, then those among the Bafia. These migrations are the explanation for the wide scattering of Ngoo villages and for the frequent moves. Fortunately, the appearance of the cacao tree has begun to stabilize a number of these settlements.

THE BAFOK-TANGAFUK

101 Location: widely scattered, to be found in
131 several settlements sometimes
361 very far from each other
Between 11°15 and 12°30 long.
and 4°30 and 5°10 north lat.

101 The peoples who are the subject of this chapter have been given several names spelled in a variety of ways by Europeans. On German maps they appear as "Fuk," "Fɔk," or "Fu." In French reports and maps they are called "Baveuk," "Bafeuk," or "Yangafouk." All these words seem to resemble each other, and, in reality, they are identical.

[161] Physical and Human Geography. Total population: 5, 352 inhabitants.

361 Three little enclaves of these people a few kilometers long may be
461 found on the Yoko road east of Bafia. They are settled in eight villages all told and inhabit an area of very fertile soil and forest. Cacao, palmettoes, or food crops could bring them prosperity, were it not for
[16] their laziness. (The people of these villages number 1, 556.)

•173 The five southernmost villages of the eight say that their members
361 come from the southeast, from the plain of the Sanaga, or from the east, from the plain of Djerem.

The two neighboring villages to the northeast are called Yalongo (see the chapter on the Yekaba and the Bamvele). It is thought that the Yalongo conquered the Bafɔk and /64/ adopted their language. Finally, the eighth village is said to be related to the first five and to have come also from Djerem.

[16] To the southeast of Yoko is an enclave whose two villages, in the middle of the prairie (445 inhabitants), claim to be related both to the Yalongo and the southern Bafɔk.

[16] About 50 kilometers north of Yoko, in the Babute country, is the enclave of Lena consisting of 260 inhabitants. It is said that they came from the south and reached their present habitat by traveling an arc of 250 kilometers via Tibati. /Map 4/

[16] The 360 inhabitants of the enclave of Yassem, in the midst of the Tikar country, 120 kilometers west of Yoko, say that they sprang from the Bamvele. We would be more inclined to say that they share a common origin with the latter. The wars among the tribes brought them to the Tikar country where they isolated themselves on their
[197] mountain. They differ from other Bafɔk in that they have adopted the Islamic religion of the Tikar and that they recognize no kinship with the southern Bafɔk.

361 A single village may be found on the banks of the M'Bam, a few
161 kilometers from the town of Bafia. (It has 313 inhabitants.)

And lastly, on the right bank of the Sanaga, there are several Yangafuk villages (containing 2, 418 inhabitants) which are related to those found in the south on the Yoko road but separated from them by a thick forest. /65/

361 the Betsenga) as far north as its tributary the Maloko and, toward the south, for about a dozen kilometers inland. Another Tsinga zone exists in the northwest on both sides of the M'Bam. Another fairly homogeneous center may be found much farther south, east of Yaoundé. Finally, there are several Tsinga villages just south of the Nyong in the vicinity of the southern road.

It is impossible to calculate the area of their various habitats except near the M'Bam (75 square km.), among the Betsenga of the Sanaga (180 square km.), and for the few purely Tsinga villages east of Yaoundé (189 square km.). Elsewhere these people appear only together with other populations.

[61] The total population comes to 15, 562 persons.

361 Near the M'Bam, as well as on the Sanaga and its little tributaries,
●13 the Tsinga are settled in a land of small hills and valleys, on a prairie broken by groves and by clumps of forest. According to their traditions they originally lived north of the Sanaga, but the Babute advanced upon them. Many of them crossed the river. It appears that as soon as the Germans came and /67/ stopped the Babute, some of the Tsinga returned to the north of the Sanaga. /Map 5 covers p. 66./

197 Some say that the Tsinga are related to the Eton, and this statement
113 seems to be confirmed by the similarity between the two languages (See Nekes) /"Jaunde und seine Bewohner (Südkamerun)"/Yaoundé and its inhabitants (South Cameroons/, " Koloniale Rundschau, 1912/. See a few words of vocabulary in G. Tessmann's Die Pangwe /The Fang/. Völkerkundliche Monographie eines westafrikanischen Negerstammes. Ergebnisse der Lübecker Pangwe-Expedition 1907-1909 und früherer Forschungen 1904-1907 /Anthropological Monograph on a West African Negro Tribe, Results of the Lübeck Fang Expedition 1907-1909 and Earlier Research in 1904-1907/ (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1913), p. 34, under the name "Bati (Batjenga)," as well as H. H. Johnston, A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages, (Oxford University Press, Vol. 1, 1919, Vol. 2, 1922), Vocabulary No. 216, under "Bati (Bacenga)."

161 Demography. Their population balance is favorable; the ratio of births to deaths is 4 1.14 percent.

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MANGISA

131 Location: 11°15 to 11°30 long.
4°25 to 4°30 north lat.

Physical and Human Geography

131 Area: about 316 square km.
161 Population: 14,588 inhabitants
Density: 46.2 per square km.

131 The Mangisa occupy the right bank at the bend of the Sanaga, a land of wooded hills.

173 They were probably among the peoples who crossed the Sanaga rather early, for their traditions say that, in later times, when the Eton also crossed the river, they found the Mangisa occupying the territory. /Map 6/ Fairly intensive struggles followed; then the two peoples formed an alliance which enabled them to live in peace side by side.

341 Like the Eton, the agricultural Mangisa live in large villages. Be-
311 cause of the density of the population, the entire /68/ woodland has to a large extent been cleared for their plantations, and palm trees have been planted.

197 But what is the exact origin of the Mangisa?
174 Language. The question has been raised in linguistics.
G. Tessmann has written: "In the classification of the Pahouin tribes of the north, the situation is not yet clear. One thing is certain: all the tribes—at least all those of the northeast—contain a more or less pronounced component derived from the Bati-Mbam. Thus, a few decades ago, the Eton and the Mangisa spoke a pure Bati; they have therefore become Pahouinized only in recent times, at least as regards language (1)."

1. Günter Tessmann, "Die Völker und Sprachen Kameruns /The People and

131 Physical Geography. Area: 2, 550 square km.

133 The country of the Esoe is made up of hills and plateaux; it drifts
137 gently down from the heights of the country of the Ewondo to the valley of the Sanaga River. The border of the great southern forest crosses the territory from south to north; the westerly two-thirds of the area are covered with forest, and the last third is prairie. The Sanaga borders the country only in the northwest and northeast, for the greater part of the loop /misprint in French text: bouche for boucle. See map./ of the river is occupied by the Mangisa. /69/

161 Human Geography. Population: 111, 738 inhabitants
Density: 44.3 persons per square km.

173 It is impossible to say whether the Esoe should be counted among the Beti populations who were dislodged and crossed the Sanaga or whether they were among the first Pahouin to cross the Sanaga at the time of the invasion. Their traditions do not go back very far; they only tell of their departure from the fork of the M'Bam and the Sanaga. /Map 7/ The Esoe say that after crossing the river in the direction of the present-day village of Nkolbogo, they fell upon the Mangisa who had already arrived, and then spread themselves throughout the territory which they occupy to this day.

361 The Esoe are settled in large villages, whose hamlets line the length
467 of their many trails. At present their country is traversed by several roads on which heavy trucks can travel so that their products can reach Yaoundé and the railroad.

197 Language. With reference to this subject it seems best to refer the reader to the paragraph on linguistics in the chapter on the Mangisa, since the same question is raised for the two peoples. /70/

Physical Anthropology and Demography. The Esoe are above
average in height, mesocephalic, and platyrrhin.

Their blood-group ratio is typically Negro, with a relatively high proportion of the AB type:

O: 55.7 percent; A: 13.8 percent; B: 17.5 percent; AB: 12.9 percent;—index $\frac{[A+AB]}{[B+AB]}$: 0.878.

Their height is /for the/ average: men 167.8 cm.; women 158.9 cm.

[53] The southeastern part of Ewondo territory is also watered by the high stream of the little river Lokoundje.

The whole country is very fertile, rich with food crops and beautiful groves of cacao trees.

Human Geography

[54] Population: Ewondo (in the Yaounde subdivision)--70, 994 in 1946
" " " M'Balmayo ")--15, 359
" " " Lolodorf ")-- 6, 674 in 1947
93, 027

Evunok: 4, 273 inhabitants

The population density varies greatly in the different zones: the region north of the Nyong is most densely populated, 49.3 persons per square kilometer; south of the Nyong there are 13.1 persons per square kilometer; in Evunok, 5 persons per square kilometer.

[173] History. The Ewondo settled in their present habitat quite recently --one hundred and fifty years ago at most. According to their traditions, they began the last stage of their migrations somewhere on the right bank of the Sanaga near its junction with the M'Bam. They crossed the Sanaga about five generations ago, at the time when all the peoples north of the Sanaga suffered the consequences of pressure by the Fulbe. They spread southward, and some of them even crossed the Nyong and traveled in the "low" direction (west) toward the commercial roads.

It is believed that German expeditions first reached the Ewondo in about the year 1887 (during the exploration by Kund, Tappenbeck, and Weimenhorr). The administrative "station" of Yaoundé was created in 1889, and its direction was placed in the hands of G. Zenker, a man of science whose name is not likely to be forgotten in the Cameroons.

According to most of the traditions, the Evunok (1) were the last

[101] 1. Their name is said to be nothing but a nickname meaning "elephant's stomach," which was given them by the other Ewondo after a hunt which was followed by an unforgettable feast.

of the Ewondo to arrive during the last migration, and they were

173 therefore forced to settle in the most westerly area. (See the unpublished report of Father Sohler.) Others say (according to the report of X. Béliard) that they are only brothers of the Ewondo, who crossed the Sanaga, entered the southern forest as far as the present-day region of Ebolowa, stayed there a few years, and, step by step, took the northwest route, crossing the Lokoundje River. Then they infiltrated among the Basa tribes and settled in their present habitat. What we know for certain is that not until 1910 did they occupy the three villages on the road between Kribi and Edéa, and that their migration was still in full swing when the German occupation forced them to settle in one spot.

184 563 The population in the vast territory occupied by the Ewondo is not culturally homogeneous. In many villages and even in the hamlets, the Ewondo live side by side with members of neighboring groups. On our map we have indicated the most important enclaves and mixed settlements /Map 8, facing p. 72/, namely those where the strangers are as numerous as the Ewondo or even more so. /72/ The actual situation is more complex than this, but on a map of this scale it has not been possible to show the minorities. (1)

[114]

1. A remarkable large-scale diagrammatic map of the administrative subdivision of Yaoundé should be mentioned here. It was set up in 1944 by the administrator J. Christol and shows even the smallest intermixtures, with proportional strengths, for every village and hamlet.

361 511 The Ewondo live in sizable villages which stretch along the many roads in the area. The villages are well maintained and show evidence of a comfortable standard of living which is largely the result of the prosperity of their cacao trees and their trade.

181 The Ewondo are robust and muscular, skillful and intelligent. They emigrate readily, and their workers are valued in all enterprises.

497 The shipment of their products is facilitated by a major branch of the railway which crosses their territory between Yaoundé and Otélé, and transportation on their roads plays an important role in getting the various foodstuffs and the cacao from the great markets in the bush to the railroad.

113 The oldest sketch map on which the Bane are shown is a map without scale, but where the distances are calculated in terms of "hours on foot"; it appears in Von Stein's report entitled "Ueber die geographische Verhältnisse des Bezirkes Lolodorf (Sudkamerun Gebiet), speziell die dort wohnenden Volksstämme /The Geographic Relationships of the Lolodorf District (South Cameroom), especially the Resident Tribes/," in Mitteilungen aus den deutschen Schutzgebeiten, 1899, pp. 120-41. This report also contains an extensive geneological table which includes the Bane; ethnographic details on pp. 135-38 should be especially noted.

Deutsches Kolonial Lexikon, under the word "Bane."

Moisel maps, G2, Jaunde, and H 1-2, Kribi.

Bearth. "Le Nsig N'to, ancienne coutume Bane /The Nsig N'to, an Ancient Bane Custom/," Togo-Cameroun, January 1930, pp. 19-22.

Important unpublished documents exist on the subject of customs, shelter, and subsistence among the Bane.

THE FONG

131 Location: 11° and 11°15 long.
3°15 north lat.
and 11°30 to 12° long.

101 Physical and Human Geography. The Fong /Fang/ are not all settled in a single area. They constitute a very small population divided into three separate clusters, lined up from west to east; the total area of the different small zones occupied by these settlements is about 1, 152 square kilometers, and in the largest and most easterly, the enclaves of Bulu villages are to be found.

101 563 Bertaut has written: "The territory is occupied by Bane and Fong without any geographical unity. Fong, Bulu, and Bane are intermingled, and one passes from a Bane area /76/ to a Fong area without noticing. This situation is the result of a mingling of tribes which must have occurred when the Bane and the Fong, who came from the north, encountered the Fang and the Bulu, who were also not yet permanently settled." (Report of May, 1932)

113 The Fong may be considered the southernmost participants in the recent invasion which brought the Ewondo and the Bane to the south

Fang
Fang

173 of the Nyong. According to their traditions they come from an area north of the Sanaga, as do the other groups which preceded them. They settled in the forest, where there are at present 12, 783 of them (a density of 6.9 persons per square km.).

[61]

231 262 The Fong are an agricultural people. They seem to have little inclination to hunt so that their diet consists chiefly of vegetables, although they have a fairly large number of domesticated animals. /Map 11/

141 Physical Anthropology and Demography. Average height: men 169.7 cm.; women 162 cm.

Indexes	Men	Women
Cephalic	80.8	81.5
Nasal	95.21	84.01

NJ 163 The population balance is slightly positive, the ratio of birth to deaths being +0.77. The rate of sterility is high, 25.6 percent, but is fortunately compensated for by the fertility rate, 5.3 pregnancies per woman.

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THE FANG, THE MVAE, THE NTUMU

131 Location: $10^{\circ}45$ to $12^{\circ}45$ long, and a few islands between 10° and $10^{\circ}30$ long.

361 The Ntumu make up a fairly homogeneous group falling between the Fang and the Mvae.

•173 History. According to the oral traditions of the Fang, the last stage of their journey to their present habitat brought them from the south. Therefore, it is possible that they formed a part of the ancient Fang migration which came from the north /78/ and reached Gabon by way of the Ivindo Valley. It is thought that the few groups under discussion then moved slightly north, where they encountered the Bulu who arrived somewhat later.

The Mvae are an offshoot of the Fang, who arrived with the latter. At first they were dispersed throughout the whole N'Tem basin but were later displaced by the arrival of the Ntumu.

It is impossible to separate the arrival of the Ntumu in the N'Tem Basin from that of the Fang, since they were a part of the same invasion. But their oral traditions say that they occupied the country in two waves which came from different directions. It is thus possible to distinguish in their history two branches of migration: One came from the northeast, passed through the Eboiowa region, and went down to the south. Other Ntumu came from the present-day territory of Sangmélima with the Fang and went south with them, through Mimvoul, Bitam, and Oyem. Like some of the Fang, they then went back north and west through the valleys of the Woleu Benito, the N'Tem, and the Kyé. The fusion of the two branches occurred either on the banks of the N'Tem (in the Eba region) or between the Kye and the N'Tem, between 1905 and 1910. Their villages became mixed. It was during these local migrations that the Mvae branch is thought to have been N'Tem pushed out of the Basin.

197 Language. The Fang speak the language that they brought with them from the more southern region (present-day Gabon) when their migration moved back from south to north. Struck believes that they are the ones who, coming from the south, introduced their neo-Bantu language among peoples somewhat further to the west, and that the Bane and the Ewondo, who until that time had spoken "Ati," were also reached in this movement from south to north. (Koloniale Rundschau, 1912, p. 220.)

If this assertion is plausible it forces us to think that the arrival of the Bulu, who are also Pahouin, was not the end of a migration, for their presence in their current habitat would have prevented a direct contact between the Fang and the Ewondo, the only condition under which such a far-reaching linguistic influence would have been possible.

361 in a country full of valleys and woods. The territory covers about
133 1, 728 square kilometers. /Map 13/

Human Geography

161 Population and density of each group:

True Bulu: 96, 216 inhabitants; 9. 59 persons per square km.

Yengoue, Yembeme, Yelinde: 12, 987 inhabitants;
7. 5 persons per square km.

Zaman: 1, 407 inhabitants.

●173 History. The Bulu say that they come from the east. Indeed, those who have surveyed the area with care say that "old natives can mark the sites of the villages in which they were born and those of their fathers. Going back generation by generation the track leads east." (1)

1. Bertaut, Droit coutumier des Boulous
(The Customary Law of the Bulu), p. 40.

174 By bringing together linguistic and ethnographic data it has been possible to determine that, during the first wave of the Pahouin invasion, the Bulu first followed the high valley of the Sanaga and then took a direction from north to south, which it has been possible to set at 12° to 12°30 longitude. They swamped the Maka, who were settled there before them, and chased them out of the entire territory. Traditions describe them as dividing into two groups once they reached present-day Sangmélima. One group spread throughout that section and moved toward the west; those who went furthest reached almost to the ocean, from which they were separated by only a few coastal populations.

The other group went toward the east into the great forest, and the Zaman pushed all the way to the Dja, 120 kilometers away.

But considering the assertion of B. Struck and Father Nekes that the Fang language influenced that of the Ewondo, we would seem justified in placing the Bulu settlement between the Ewondo and the Fang at a very recent time, for this influence was only possible through constant and direct contacts and intermingling, not by crossing over the Bulu to reach each other. In this case does linguistics enable us to date history?

[2] We connect the Bobili with the Bamvele because, on the one hand, they do not appear separately from the Bele on the Moisel map (Dumm, G3), and, on the other, the traditions pertaining to their origins are not precise enough to permit us to draw a conclusion differing from that of the Germans.

Physical and Human Geography

[3] Area: 2, 472 square km.

[4] Population: Bamvele—18, 452 inhabitants
Bobili—6, 247 inhabitants

Density: 10 persons per square km.

[33] The Bamvele are close neighbors of the Yekaba and the Yebekolo in the north; they occupy a large homogeneous territory on the border between forest and prairie. The country is almost flat, extending into the Sanaga plain and borders the river for about 30 kilometers. The territory is watered by several broad tributaries of the Sanaga. In the east, one of these tributaries, the Long, serves as a frontier between the Bamvele and the Babute, who surround them everywhere except in the south. A few Bamvele villages have been established [34] on the right bank of the Long, and they border the Bertoua road for a few kilometers.

[11] Like their neighbors, the Yekaba, the Bamvele in their traditions tell that their origins are to be sought among the Yalongo north of the Sanaga. They too were pushed by the Babute who were under pressure from the Fulbe; they fled south and crossed the Sanaga a little more than a hundred years ago. Their history is identical with that of their neighbor, the Yekaba. /Map 17/ /89/

[13] The Bobili believe that they are native to the territory, but they say that in former times their country extended west, beyond the Long. Therefore, the impact upon them of the Babute and Fulbe movements would have been very slight. (1)

1. Unpublished report of Mr. Brothier-Oubre for May, 1945.

[11] The administrator Chauleur carried out prolonged research in an attempt to untangle the network of peoples on the banks of the Sanaga. He does not feel that he can make a statement about the remote origins of the Yalongo, but he poses the following problem: "Could they be related to the Ba-yoka of the Congo who emigrated south

THE OMVANG

Location: the Omvang are split into two sections
One section: 12°15 to 12°50 long.
3°55 to 4°05 north lat.
Other section: 12°45 to 13° long.
4°05 to 4°28 north lat.

Physical and Human Geography

Area: in the west—about 390 square km.
in the east—about 660 square km.

Population: in the west—4, 852 inhabitants
in the east—7, 520 inhabitants

Density: in the west—12.4 persons per square km.
in the east—11 persons per square km.

The Omvang inhabit a forest country which is quite poor in the west but rich in the east. Those who are furthest west, northwest of Ayos, are on the banks of the Nyong, and that is the only place where they have access to a road. The territory of the eastern Omvang is in the valley of the Ayong, a tributary from the right of the Nyong, but their country does not reach as far as the river itself. However, the stream is navigable everywhere so that the river can be easily reached. Ayong flows first of all through a forest which thins out toward the south and is replaced by beautiful clusters of raffia palms.

The Omvang know little of their history. They know only that less then a century ago they still occupied the entire territory north of the Nyong; they were in constant contact with the Yebekolo and were sometimes their masters, sometimes their slaves. They were warriors trained in guerrilla warfare, and in the end they attacked the neighboring Maka and wrested from them the land which is their present habitat. The advance of the Yebekolo /92/ split them into two sections. Only the intervention of the Germans in 1904-1905 reestablished peace in the area.

P. Chauleur does not agree with the view that the Omvang are a people of the Pahouin group. His arguments, based only on data concerning local migrations, seem to be no more valid than those he opposes.

The eastern Omvang, settled in a fertile region are hard-working and good farmers. In addition to their food crops they care for large

K2 Dominated by the great and often marshy forest, this country is
861 characterized by a very localized population indicated on a map by "strips" linked to the system of rivers. In the two districts which they occupy, Booué and Makokou, the Fang are the dominating ethnic group, forming about 45 percent and 40 percent of the total population. They are in the neighborhood of ethnic groups which are considered to be related to them, the Shaké and the
FH19 Bakwélé. By their migrations they have disordered the population of this region and created contacts resulting in great cultural contaminations. If one can believe Father Trilles, who noted an "archaic language" used in the legends, proverbs, and songs, and similar to Baséké, (1) the relations with the peoples of the Congo

1. Father H. Trilles, op. cit

and Gabon borders would be early.

•173 According to tradition, the Fang-Maké (or Bisibé) were the first to reach the Ivindo. De Brazza finds them on the Ogooué (on the island of Zabouré). Their largest tribe is Mékuk, specifically
619 referred to by Father Trilles and specially mentioned by Tessmann on his distribution map. Outside of the Maké, the Fang of this region are in two distinct groups -- Bétsi and Nzaman -- the latter representing, according to early authors, the "true Pahouin of the Ogooué." (2) In Booué District the villages, although without clan

2 Cf. Captain Cureult, "Monographie du secteur de N'Djolé au Gabon [Monograph on the N'Djolé section of Gabon]," Revue des Troupes Coloniales, 68, 1908.

homogeneity, showed at the time of the "regrouping movement" the predominance of the three great tribes, Yémɔ̂ɔ̂g, Yémvɛ̂g, and Yémisɛm.

511 The Ogooué-Ivindo seems to be one of the poorest regions of
702 Gabon. Not having any economic equipment, it was only precariously active during the war effort. On the other hand, frequent recruiting has seriously affected this country (which along with

who were settled among them and the Boulou. The last Beti groups to cross the Sanaga, blocked by those who had preceded them, have turned perpendicularly or obliquely to the general axis of migration.

The total migration was made exclusively by land, even when its axis followed the course of a navigable river. The Pahouin are not users of the pirogue, and the customary trails followed along ridges rather than valleys. Settlement is mainly linear, stretched along trails and, now, roads, in long ribbons, separated by empty areas.

The traditions dealing with this exodus are of three kinds: the collective tradition of the group, varying in detail from tribe to tribe but always agreeing in the broad outlines of the same theme; family traditions, consisting of a commentary on genealogies, the majority of which have not been collected and are by way of being lost due to the abandonment of the customary training of boys; finally, a pseudo tradition of contemporary invention, which is far from the least interesting. I shall here give an account only of the principal features of these traditions and, first, of the collective tradition.

According to this, the ancestors used to live in a country called mvo' ékanga or mvo' ékañá'a (Largeau: mvógh étangha), which means something like "cloudy country" or "honorable country," depending on the tone, or perhaps both at the same time (1). I have

1. a) Radical kañ • to honor, to respect, whence ékañá'a • honor, respect, veneration; b) radical kañ • to mark, to design, whence ékanga • mark, design, cloud; c) verb kañele • to lash, to shape /timber/, whence ékanga • bridge.

pointed out previously the legendary features of this land in the east, the details of which vary according to the informants. It should be observed in passing that they differ as to whether or not this land was the actual cradle of the ancestors and whether the latter came from a place located even more to the east, as the present pseudo tradition assets (2).

2. The last of the Ntoumou storytellers sing to the accompaniment of a guitar, mvet, the exploits of the bikañ or bo'bikañá,

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superhuman heroes, who include not only their ancestors but also the earliest well-known Europeans: Ngôô Zambe (Rev. Good), Mendômô (Hauptmann von Hagen), Abôô (Marius Pascalet), etc., thus are found to be naturalized as it were and incorporated into tradition.

Driven out of this country by red giants (or by a red giant), the ancestors, fleeing to save their lives, were brought to a standstill at the Sanaga, incapable of crossing it until the intervention of the guardian of the waters, a python according to Beti and Boulou, a crocodile according to /16/ the Fang (1). By stretching himself across

1. Bertaut gives the names as mot yom and nga medja or ngan meja. Discounting a mistake in transcription, these expressions could mean "a being to be supplicated," "crocodile to be supplicated," from môt (Fang, môt, mut) = person; ngan = crocodile; ja'ê (Boulou) daak, daaghê (Ewondo, Fang) = to ask, to supplicate; yom = to beg, to implore.

the river this animal formed a bridge which the ancestors crossed family by family, in order of primogeniture, until the moment when a child (or woman) wounded the animal's back by letting fall a weapon (or a torch). The animal dived below, abandoning on the right bank the Beti group that is still there today.

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Osoe Nnanga, whence Europeans have derived "Sanaga," means "white river" or "river of the albino." White is the color of death; ghosts (bekôn) are white; albinos are thought to be offspring of incubi. Lastly, the land of the dead has always been situated in the west, toward the sea (man), even though the Pahouin could not have known the sea except by hearsay. Considered in connection with some of the legends collected by Trilles, these facts may lead us to think that the Pahouin in crossing the Sanaga were entering, at least symbolically, the land of the dead.

When they had reached the left bank, they found their road blocked by an impenetrable forest, with the single path obstructed by an

[73] enormous ajap (Mimvungu djave), the tree symbolic of power and of physical and spiritual vigor. They made their way through it by means of a narrow tunnel, the niom ajap, and were able from then on to go forward unimpeded. But after this passage a quarrel broke out between the brothers, over women according to some, over precedence and inheritance according to others, and they separated into four groups, of which one remained on the spot, the others heading toward the sea by the three routes described above.

Thereafter we have to refer to family traditions in order to follow the wanderings of each group, which are impossible to describe in detail.

The most interesting contribution from recent pseudo tradition is without doubt the genealogy collected among the Ntoumou by the administrative officer André, which is particularly widespread among the Fang linguistic division of the Pahouin group. It starts with the ancestor Afiri Kara, leader of the migration at the time of the crossing of the Sanaga, who died after the passage through the niom ajap. Afiri Kara, "who gave his name to Africa," was the son of Kara Kuba, son of Kuba Ta, son of Ta Ma'a, son of Ma'a Ngɛ̂, "who is the father of the Negro race." The sons of Afiri Kara are the ancestors of the present tribes, to whom they have given their names, names which are in fact nicknames derived from puns. For instance, Ntumu Afiri, the ancestor of the Ntoumou, walked with a stick (ntum). Ewɔ̂ndɔ̂ Afiri was fond of groundnuts (ewɔ̂ndɔ) or had as many offspring as the seed of a groundnut; Bulu Afiri was especially hard working or serious (bulu: from the root bo, to do = to do seriously, really), (2) etc.

2. Cf. the verb fañ = to do well, to do really, on purpose.

Largeau and Tessmann seem to be entirely unacquainted with this legend, whose origin probably does not go back beyond the First World War. /17/

The contribution of pseudo tradition is harder to ascertain in the legends collected by Largeau, Trilles, and Grebert concerning the actual origin of the human race. The theme is that of Jacob and Esau: a younger son of Zobeyo Mebe'e (in Fang: Nzame Mebeghe, Nzame Mebere) takes advantage of the stupidity of his elder brother to become heir to this world's riches (biom, bium = wealth, goods,

as against the fruits of the earth) and flees to the west, land of the dead or the ancestors, where the frustrated elder son pursues him (1).

1. This association of the west with material goods, of the east with the produce of the land, is found again in the potlatch (bilaba), described further on.

Largeau and Grebert make of the usurping younger son the ancestor of the Whites, but Trilles has collected versions which he considers older, in which the younger son is the ancestor of the Bantu of the coast; these versions, moreover, exist side by side with Largeau's. It is possible that the association of the younger son with the Whites dates from the first trade contacts. /18/

Chapter 3

The Language

1. Distribution

The group as a whole is characterized by an unquestionable linguistic unity, which spreads across cultural and anthropological boundaries. I have earlier indicated the existence of Pahouinized tribes or tribes becoming Pahouinized, especially the Maka and the Kozimé. To these must be added the Pygmies living symbiotically with the Pahouin, and whose language they appear to have adopted to a very great extent, to a point where it is difficult to know for certain if they still possess a language of their own.

Moreover, Pahouin dialects tend to be used as a trade language in areas where, on the one hand, the Pahouin are but a minority, often as emigrants, or, on the other, in regions less advanced economically and socially than is their own habitat.

There are therefore:

a) A true Pahouin linguistic area: this is Pahouin country as described in the first chapter. There Pahouin is spoken as a mother tongue by the Pahouin themselves and in all probability by the Pygmies.

533 skits, often satirical, sometimes to the accompaniment of European tunes that have been adapted to the instrument. Choral song, finally, is very popular, using imported tunes that are often considerably improved by the native interpretation which makes extensive use of fugue and counterpoint. Unfortunately, these modern airs are not suited to the tonal system of the language, which they tend to impair when words are adapted to them.

538 Chronicles, minkaffere, of which the salutations, mebatan, were in a way summaries, were part of traditional training and were recited only on solemn occasions. They are falling into oblivion because of the considerable demands they made upon the memory and because of the time necessary for learning them by heart, without mentioning the fact that they contained incomprehensible passages, perhaps borrowed from tribes that were neighbors of the Pahouin before their great migration. /126/

177 536 The systems of transcription introduced by missionaries were first used to translate the Scriptures and to compose hymns, which have not always had a good effect upon the language but have nonetheless become classics in spite of the mistakes and improprieties they often contain. After these works produced by Europeans in the native language, there have appeared in rapid succession works composed by Pahouin writing in their own language. The most remarkable is without doubt Nnanga mfin by the Boulou, Jemba Medu, which describes Boulou life at the time of the arrival of the first white men (nnanga mfin = phantom albino). This, to my knowledge, is the only novel composed in one of the languages of the group; its popularity is prodigious, to such a degree that its characters have entered into contemporary Boulou folklore.

204 There is a missionary press in Gabon and in the Cameroons. The papers with the largest circulation are Nleb Bekristen (Christians' Guide) (Ewondo, Catholic) and Mefoé (News) (Boulou, Protestant), which is read as far afield as Gabon. The lay press in French is not of much importance and its publications moreover are usually short lived.

536 A Pahouin literature in the French language is a recent — and significant — phenomenon. Oyono and Eza Boto-Mongo Beti are both from the Cameroons; neither Gabon nor Spanish Guinea have up to now produced a novelist.

535 The dance has lost a great deal in being deprived of its old ritual character. Formerly there was a specific dance for every ceremony,

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 F319 Fang F319

and like a resistless army they are steadily approaching the coast, building towns and displacing weaker tribes. That fine race of people, the Mpongwes, often spoken of as the "aristocratic tribe," and ranking first in the scale of civilization above all other tribes in the French Congo, is rapidly dying out, and they are already being supplanted even at Gaboon by the migratory Fang.

The Bulu people inhabiting a portion of the German sphere of influence in West Africa are without doubt very closely related to, if not a direct offshoot from, the Fang; their customs are identical and their language so markedly similar that a person who is able to speak Bulu is readily understood by the Fang. The first day of my arrival among the Fang, after residing in Bululand, I was able to make known the reason for my coming and to ask and answer ordinary questions. While visiting on a small island called Nonga-songo in the Nkomo River, a very old Fang man told me as follows: When a lad his grandfather had told him that, a long time ago, many of his tribe "changed their towns." These people first travelled far in canoes, and then after journeying for very many days through the forest, they "stopped walking and made new towns," and they did not return. My informant's father had told him later more about these people; they had been heard from, and their long absence from the original tribe had so changed them that "they spoke new words" (a new language).

Examples could be given almost without limit of the great similarity in the language as spoken by the Bulu and Fang. A few will suffice; and I will select from the proverbs of the people which are also identical. Tell a Bulu man to hurry with his work, he will often reply, "*Ale da dapi bé*' said?" (Will one day eat an elephant?). The Fang speak the same proverb thus: "*Ale ewori bé*' said?" Again, the Bulu use the words *Mebe ngon* (the days that are past), *Mebe am* (the days that are to come), *Mebe mesese* (all the days). These sayings and numerous similar ones are in daily use among the Fang, the words used and the idiom being almost identically the same as in Bulu. I have wondered if the account given me by the old Fang man at Nonga-songo about the people who years ago "changed their towns," might not be of more than passing interest as touching the genesis of the Bulu.

The Fang people are spread over an immense area of country, and when questioned regarding their numbers they usually reply, "There are Fang and Fang; if you walk and sleep in towns and towns for many *mesese* (months) you will find Fang." In the future it will be found that in the ethnography of equatorial Africa the Fang will hold a very important place. As before stated they are unquestionably closely related to the Bulu, and Compagnon recognized a marked similarity between them and the Oyeula, Mombuttu and Nyamnyam people. There are several scattered tribes of dwarfs among the Fang. Five of these pigmies live within two miles of my station, and they tell me that more of their people will soon "move their towns" and come to live on the banks of the Nkomo river. The Fang people look on the pigmies as a very clever and superior people, and not without good reason. An old headman told me that the *nsoo ngoi* (dwarfs) first